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Title: Need to take step to retrieve 'Kohinoor' diamond from England.

SHRI BHARTRUHARI MAHTAB: By no stretch of imagination can it be interpreted that the gifting of the "diamond" by the young Daleep Singh who was hardly eight years old to the Queen of England was an act of cheerful volition. It was a surrender under duress. What courage did this Government displayed to take a stand in the Supreme Court on the Kohinoor? True courage would lie not in stating the technical position but accepting the fact that the diamond was taken away by force. The acceptance would be just as well because we have also not been able to do anything about untold plunder of India, its people, jewels and the mineral wealth under the colonial rule for centuries.

Students of history tell us that Lord Dalhousie, the then Governor General of India had acquired this stone as spoils of war after the end of Anglo-Sikh war in 1849. I have with me a letter which was written on 2nd July, 1839 by the then political agent who was stationed in Lahore to the Governor General. That letter was written to T.A. Medock Square officiating Secretary to the Government of India with the Right hon. Governor General. It was a five page letter. It was a scroll in a sense. I would like to only mention the last paragraph of that letter because this is my demand which I would like to place before the Government. It is a very calligraphic letter and it is difficult for us to read now fully. But it has been retrieved and I think, if the Government of India wants to retrieve it, then they can do so from the archives. I will place it on the Table of the House for purposes of records.

In this letter the list has been given. This letter states that just before Maharaja Ranjit Singh was supposed to breathe his last, the situation has been explained in this letter. In this letter the power equation as it was changing in that palace of Lahore has been narrated. But towards the end of this letter the wish of Maharaja Ranjit Singh has been mentioned. In this letter the British Officer, the political agent, is writing to the Governor General that the wish of Maharaja Ranjit Singh was to donate, to gift this precious diamond to Lord Jagannath temple of Puri. We all know that Maharaja Ranjit Singh did the golden cover of Swarna Mandir at Amritsar; he also did the golden cover of Kashi Viswanath temple of Varanasi and here is a wish which remained unfulfilled because the second Anglo-Sikh war of 1849 when the British connived or conspired to acquire that land and at that time Lord Dalhousie who was defeated in American War of Independence but became successful here in 1857. But this Anglo-Sikh war was in 1849 when it was acquired. It was not a gift. It was a position taken by the Government of India in the 50s. At that time it was said that we cannot retrieve it because we are under the position of certain Antiquities and other laws which still prevails. But the interesting fact is what the British Prime Minister has recently said. He said that if they are going to return all their treasure to the rightful owner, their museum would be empty. This is what the present Prime Minister of Britain has said.

Madam, let us not forget the sword of Tipu Sultan's return to India on the strength of the tainted money of a liquor baron whose passport has been seized. I am not saying that we should entrust this job to that person but I would only request the Government to take a position not only in our Supreme Court but also impress upon the Government of United Kingdom that this precious stone should come back to us. Here lies the story. I would plead before this Government and the Members of the Ruling Party that every Hindu believes that this was the *Samantakmani* which was retrieved by Lord Krishna and till Alauddin Khilji captured it from the Kakatiya Kingdom. The Mountain of Light, as Kohinoor is called, is named since the 14th century. It stayed with the Mughals for the longest period. We believe, as the story goes, this diamond can only be borne by the God or God Head or by women. If this is the case Lord Jagannath is the rightful owner. This was the wish of Maharaja Ranjit Singh and I would request this Government to take all steps to retrieve that.

HON. SPEAKER:

Shri Gajendra Singh Shekhawat,

Kunwar Pushpendra Singh Chandel,

Shri Bhairon Prasad Mishra,

Shri Rajendra Agrawal,

Shri Rabindra Kumar Jena,

Shri Sharad Tripathi,

Dr. Satya Pal Singh,

Dr. A. Sampath,

Prof. (Dr.) Prasanna Kumar Patasani,

Shri Ravindra Kumar Pandey are permitted to associate with the issue raised by Shri Bhartruhari Mahtab.

श्री प्रेम सिंह चन्दूमाजरा (आनंदपुर साहिब) : अध्यक्ष महोदया, महताब जी ने जो बात कही है, मैंने भी इसका नोटिस दिया था। कोहिनूर हीरे के इतिहास के बारे में इन्होंने बहुत ही डिटले में कहा है। यह महाराजा रंणजीत के साथ जुड़ा था। यह अलग बात है कि नादिर के, बाबर के या किसी क्राउन का रहा और आंध्र प्रदेश से शुरू हुआ। मगर इसमें कई सवाल आए हैं कि जो सुप्रीम कोर्ट में हमारे कल्चर मिनिस्ट्री ने पक्ष दिया है, वह निंदनीय है। वह वापस लेना चाहिए। एक्सटरनल अफेयर्स मिनिस्ट्री को वहां अपना केस रखना चाहिए। यह कैसे हो सकता है कि 11 वर्ष का बच्चा दुश्मन को गिफ्ट कैसे दे सकता है? महाराजा रणजीत सिंह ने यह गिफ्ट में लिया था। जब अफगानिस्तान राज्य की उन्होंने मदद की तब उन्होंने महाराजा रणजीत सिंह को यह गिफ्ट में दिया था। जब सन् 1849 में उनके बच्चे को कैदी बना कर कुछ गद्दार लोगों की सलाह कर, काउंसिल बना कर, जो यह गिफ्ट लिखा गया, यह न तो कनिंघम ने माना है और न दुनिया के बड़े हिस्टोरियन ने माना। दुनिया के जो बहुत रैप्युटिड हिस्टोरियान हैं, उन्होंने यह लिखा है कि दुनिया की सबसे बड़ी कौम अंग्रेज, जिसको ह्युमन राइट्स का चैंपियन कहा जाता है, उसने सबसे बड़ा धोखा, विश्वासघात किया है तो महाराजा रणजीत सिंह के बेटे के साथ किया है। इसलिए ब्रिटिश रूलर्स का जो लिखा हुआ है, उसको हम कैसे सच मान सकते हैं। हमारे जो इतिहासकार हैं, उनको सच मान कर मैं यह कहना चाहता हूँ कि हाउस को सर्वसम्मति से मत पास करना चाहिए। भारत सरकार को अपना पक्ष सुप्रीम कोर्ट में रखना चाहिए और कोहिनूर हीरा देश में वापस आना चाहिए। यह मेरा निवेदन है।

माननीय अध्यक्ष :

कुँवर पुष्पेन्द्र सिंह चन्देल एवं

श्री भैरों प्रसाद मिश्र को श्री प्रेम सिंह चन्दूमाजरा द्वारा उठाए गए विषय के साथ संबद्ध करने की अनुमति प्रदान की जाती है।